

### **Private Sector Witness Instruction Sheet**

1. Witnesses should provide their statement via email to the Committee Clerk, Lauren.Finks@mail.house.gov and to Delia.Barr@mail.house.gov no later than 48 hours prior to the start of the hearing. *h*
2. Witnesses should complete the attached witness disclosure form and submit it prior to the start of the hearing. If you have any questions about completing the form please contact the Committee Clerk, Lauren Finks at Lauren.Finks@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-4038. *h*
3. Witnesses should also provide a short biographical summary or CV and submit it electronically to Lauren.Finks@mail.house.gov no later than 48 hours prior to the start of the hearing. *h*
4. Prior to the start of the hearing, witnesses should provide 25 copies of their written testimony to Lauren Finks, 2361 Rayburn House Office Building. One additional copy should be delivered to Delia Barr in the Minority office, 2069 Rayburn House Office Building.
5. Please do not send copies by U.S. Mail, UPS, Federal Express, or any other shippers. Such packages are processed through an offsite security facility and will arrive late. If you do not have a Washington, D.C. area office or contact to deliver the testimony, please contact Lauren Finks at Lauren.Finks@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-4038.
6. At the hearing, each witness will be asked to orally summarize his or her testimony in 5 *h* minutes.
7. Written testimony will be available to the public and will be posted on the Committee website. The hearing will be streamed live online, and full video of the hearing will be available in digital *h* form as soon as the hearing adjourns. For questions about hearing video and public access, please feel free to contact the Committee.

**According to Committee Rules, failure to submit testimony and other materials by the deadlines may be grounds for excluding both the oral and written testimony of the witness unless waived by the Chairwoman.**

Congress of the United States  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Small Business  
2301 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515-6715

March 6, 2020

**VIA E-MAIL**

Andrew Chau  
Co-Founder & CEO  
Boba Guys  
245 Visitacion Ave  
Brisbane, CA 94005

Dear Mr. Chau:

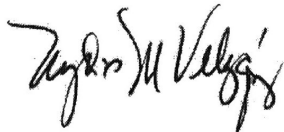
The Committee on Small Business invites you to testify at a hearing titled, "The Impact of Coronavirus on America's Small Businesses." The hearing is scheduled to begin at **11:30 AM on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 in Room 2360 of the Rayburn House Office Building.**

You should be prepared to orally summarize your written testimony in a five-minute presentation and answer questions posed by Members.

Instructions for witnesses appearing before the Committee are contained in the enclosed Witness Instruction Sheet. In particular, please note the instructions for submitting written testimony at least 48 hours prior to the start of the hearing.

The Committee looks forward to your participation. Should you have any questions regarding procedure, please contact Lauren Finks with the Committee at 202-225-4038.

Sincerely,



Nydia Velázquez  
Chairwoman



## Truth in Testimony Disclosure Form

In accordance with Rule XI, clause 2(g)(5)\*, of the *Rules of the House of Representatives*, witnesses are asked to disclose the following information. Please complete this form electronically by filling in the provided blanks.

Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Subcommittee: \_\_\_\_\_

Hearing Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Hearing Subject:

Witness Name: ANDREW CHAU

Position/Title: CO-FOUNDER & CEO

Witness Type: ☐ Governmental ☒ Non-governmental

Are you representing yourself or an organization? ☒ Self ☒ Organization

If you are representing an organization, please list what entity or entities you are representing:

BOBA GUYS INC, NATIONAL ACE

If you are a non-governmental witness, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants or subcontracts) related to the hearing's subject matter that you or the organization(s) you represent at this hearing received in the current calendar year and previous two calendar years. Include the source and amount of each grant or contract. *If necessary, attach additional sheet(s) to provide more information.*

NO GRANTS

If you are a non-governmental witness, please list any contracts or payments originating with a foreign government and related to the hearing's subject matter that you or the organization(s) you represent at this hearing received in the current year and previous two calendar years. Include the amount and country of origin of each contract or payment. *If necessary, attach additional sheet(s) to provide more information.*

N/A/NO CONTRACTS

### False Statements Certification

Knowingly providing material false information to this committee/subcommittee, or knowingly concealing material information from this committee/subcommittee, is a crime (18 U.S.C. § 1001). This form will be made part of the hearing record.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

3/8/2000  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Please attach, when applicable, the following documents to this disclosure. Check the box(es) to acknowledge that you have done so.**

- ☒ Written statement of proposed testimony
- ☒ Curriculum vitae or biography

\*Rule XI, clause 2(g)(5), of the U.S. House of Representatives provides:

(5)(A) Each committee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, require witnesses who appear before it to submit in advance written statements of proposed testimony and to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof.

(B) In the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or contracts or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the current calendar year or either of the two previous calendar years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing.

(C) The disclosure referred to in subdivision (B) shall include—

- (i) the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing; and
- (ii) the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(D) Such statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy or security of the witness, shall be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness appears.

Good morning Chairwoman Rep. Velázquez, Ranking Member Chabot, Congresswoman Chu, Congressman Kim, and distinguished members of the Committee on Small Business. Thank you for the honor of providing a testimony before the House Committee on Small Business, although I wish it were under different circumstances.

I am here today on behalf of the small business community and the over 20 million Asian American Pacific Islanders who call this country home. I am a son of immigrants— my dad, a refugee from Guangdong, China and my mother, the daughter of a Taiwanese Air Force pilot. I grew up three hours north of here in Woodbridge, New Jersey, where we ran the only Chinese restaurant in town. My family eventually moved to San Francisco, where we started another restaurant in Fisherman's Wharf. I am what you call a "restaurant brat," growing up around stoves, duck sauce, and sesame oil. I can still peel string beans in my sleep. After over a decade in Corporate America, I myself came back into the food business opening a chain of cafes and restaurants, specializing in boba milk tea and Asian-inspired snacks. We have 20 company-owned locations in San Francisco, New York City, and Los Angeles.

My story as a small business owner is fairly common— two million of the thirty million small businesses are AAPI-owned. Small business is interwoven into our culture. Growing up as perennial outsiders, we sought refuge and built businesses across Chinatowns, Japantowns, and other ethnic enclaves scattered throughout the country. And even if you didn't grow up in these enclaves, I'm sure many people— including those in this room— have stumbled into a Chinatown noodle shop or Korean BBQ joint at 1 am.

You can always count on these establishments to be open late and bustling, often run by first and second generation immigrants, hustling to make ends meet, chasing what was once the goal of every immigrant in this country, the American Dream. This dream and the small business culture embedded into the fabric of our society is at risk today. Our community usually prides itself on resourcefulness, self-reliance, and grit, so it's telling that we are asking for assistance during this crisis.

I'm sure you've all read the news. Chinatowns and other AAPI enclaves across America are experiencing a drastic decline in patronage. A recent NY Times article said that business is down as much as 70% due to the coronavirus COVID-19.

Sadly, most of this is due to misinformation and overblown media coverage depicting the virus as an Asian disease. The face of this virus has no color. It has no ethnicity. It has no borders. COVID-19 is a respiratory virus, but it is fast-mutating into a social virus: xenophobia and marginalization of everyday American citizens. I know this is the Committee on Small Business, but the negative stigma of this virus will impact our community long after COVID-19 itself is gone. We learn every day about attacks on AAPIs simply because of our physical appearance. But that is a topic for another day.

The mission of this committee is to protect and serve the interests of American small businesses. As a board member for National ACE, a national non-profit serving AAPI-owned businesses, we estimate that small businesses usually carry only two to three months of working capital. As we enter the third month since the news broke, many businesses— particularly those affected in these ethnic enclaves— are holding on for dear life. They do not have sufficient cash reserves to weather this storm. There are articles every day about small businesses trying to make ends meet due to the sudden decline in patrons. The economic hardship on each business owner then trickles down to the labor force as many places are letting go of their employees to cut costs. The destabilization of labor and discretionary income will have ripple effects throughout our economy, well extending outside our community.

In addition to influencing consumer sentiment, COVID-19 has also affected the global supply chain. My business uses ingredients from all over the world: tapioca starch from Thailand, tea from Japan, bamboo straws from Taiwan, and packaging from China. Anything that is imported from overseas is delayed a month or indefinitely in cases where factories are shut down entirely. As a community leader in small business forums, I've heard from people throughout the country that their business is facing similar issues. Banquets are canceled. Ingredients are delayed. Sole proprietorships like photographers, musicians, and anything tied to the hospitality and entertainment industry are all affected, too. We say small business is the backbone of the American economy. What happens when the backbone is fractured?

I say this on public record as a testimony not just for COVID-19, but for all further communicable disease situations that stall economic productivity. Today, the small business community, especially those near AAPI enclaves, need help. One day, it'll be another community.

What makes America so great is that we got this far despite our differences-- because we learned how to bridge our various cultures and take care of each other. As a millennial, I hear we don't really talk about The American Dream anymore. As I understand it (and I had to Google this), the American Dream is to live a "richer and fuller life, enabling opportunity according to ability and achievement." I believe your recent disaster loan relief bill breathes new life to that dream. The American Dream is alive and well— we just have to remember that enabling opportunity is not always about opening doors, but also removing barriers.

We need more help like the loan assistance program so that our small business community can thrive again. The loans give us enough runway to adjust to the changes in the marketplace, even if it is caused initially by misinformation and unwarranted stigma.

We as a community are confident that your committee will pass other pieces of legislation to show the world that small businesses embody values that built this country: grit, resilience, and helping our neighbors. Thank you for your time.

Andrew Chau is co-founder and CEO of Boba Guys and Tea People USA, a Inc. Magazine 500 award recipient. He has been featured as a top emerging business leader on CNN, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Vogue, and NPR. Prior to a career in Consumer Product Goods and corporate marketing, Andrew started and exited his first startup in 2011. In his free time, he loves traveling and is a freelance writer and an angel investor for consumer-driven businesses. His first book with Penguin Random House comes out April 2020. He has his undergraduate and graduate degrees from UC Berkeley. He and his wife are based in San Francisco, CA.